



PRESS RELEASE

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State Higher Education Commission Applauds Governor's Proposal to End "Boom and Bust" Cycle in Student Fee Charges

January 8, 2004 — Sacramento — The California Postsecondary Education Commission applauds the Governor's recent State of the State announcement to bring to an end the "boom and bust" cycle of student fee increases at California's public colleges and universities. In his address, the Governor proposed that increases in fees be linked to increases in California per capita family income and that increases not exceed 10 percent in any given year.

The State has not had a statutory student fee policy for nearly a decade. The Commission has advocated that the State enact a new policy to ensure that future increases in student fees at California's colleges are "gradual, moderate, and predictable," thereby enabling students and their families an opportunity to better plan for a postsecondary education. Although details of the Governor's plan will have to be known before the Commission takes a formal position on the proposal, having this issue raised in the State of the State Address improves the prospects for enactment of a sensible long-term fee policy.

Student fees at the California State University and the University of California have increased significantly — by nearly 40 percent this last year alone. Alternatively, there have been periods when fees have been frozen when the state's fiscal resources were in better shape. "The Governor's proposal of limiting fee increases will be welcomed by families trying to plan for their children's education," said Robert Moore, Executive Director of the Commission. "The boom and bust cycle in student fees must end," he said. The Commission's new chairperson, Howard Welinsky, added, "The Commission looks forward to working with Governor Schwarzenegger to enact a new student fee policy that will be consistent and fair to all Californians."

The California Postsecondary Education Commission advises the Governor and Legislature on higher education policy and fiscal issues. Its primary focus is to ensure that the state's educational resources are used effectively to provide Californians with postsecondary education opportunities. More information about the Commission and its work can be found at its website at www.cpec.ca.gov.